

(2) At the discretion of the hearing officer, any interested parties who make a showing that their rights may be prejudiced by the decision to be rendered at the hearing; and

(3) CMS.

[70 FR 4525, Jan. 28, 2005, as amended at 72 FR 68734, Dec. 5, 2007; 75 FR 19824, Apr. 15, 2010]

§ 423.652 Postponement of effective date of a contract determination when a request for a hearing is filed timely.

(a) *Hearing.* When a request for a hearing is timely filed, CMS will postpone the proposed effective date of the contract determination listed at 423.641 until a hearing decision is reached and affirmed by the Administrator following review pursuant to 423.666 in instances where a Part D sponsor or CMS requests Administrator review and the Administrator accepts the matter for review.

(b) *Exceptions:* (1) If a final decision is not reached on CMS' determination for an initial contract by July 15, CMS will not enter into a contract with the applicant for the following year.

(2) A contract terminated in accordance with § 423.509(b)(2)(i) of this part will be terminated on the date specified by CMS and will not be postponed if a hearing is requested.

[72 FR 68734, Dec. 5, 2007, as amended at 75 FR 19824, Apr. 15, 2010]

§ 423.653 Designation of hearing officer.

CMS designates a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer need not be an ALJ.

§ 423.654 Disqualification of hearing officer.

(a) A hearing officer may not conduct a hearing in a case in which he or she is prejudiced or partial to any party or has any interest in the matter pending for decision.

(b) A party to the hearing who objects to the designated hearing officer must notify that officer in writing at the earliest opportunity.

(c) The hearing officer must consider the objections, and may, at his or her discretion, either proceed with the hearing or withdraw.

(1) If the hearing officer withdraws, CMS designates another hearing officer to conduct the hearing.

(2) If the hearing officer does not withdraw, the objecting party may, after the hearing, present objections and request that the officer's decision be revised or a new hearing be held before another hearing officer. The objections must be submitted in writing to CMS.

§ 423.655 Time and place of hearing.

(a) The hearing officer—

(1) Fixes a time and place for the hearing, which is not to exceed 30 calendar days after the receipt of request for the hearing;

(2) Sends written notice to the parties that informs the parties of the general and specific issues to be resolved, the burden of proof, and information about the hearing procedure.

(b)(1) The hearing officer may, on his or her own motion, change the time and place of the hearing.

(2) The hearing officer may adjourn or postpone the hearing.

(c)(1) The Part D plan sponsor or CMS may request an extension by filing a written request no later than 10 calendar days prior to the scheduled hearing.

(2) When either the Part D plan sponsor or CMS requests an extension the hearing officer will provide a one-time 15-calendar day extension.

(3) Additional extensions may be granted at the discretion of the hearing officer.

[75 FR 19824, Apr. 15, 2010]

§ 423.656 Appointment of representatives.

A party may appoint as its representative at the hearing anyone not disqualified or suspended from acting as a representative before the Secretary or otherwise prohibited by law.

§ 423.657 Authority of representatives.

(a) A representative appointed and qualified in accordance with § 423.656, on behalf of the represented party—

(1) Gives or accepts any notice or request pertinent to the proceedings set forth in this subpart;